

POEMS BY ALFRED
LORD TENNYSON

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To Dearest Lucy
with warm love & earnest good wishes for
many happy Returns of her Birthday -

Nov. 9. 1906.

SOME POEMS BY
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON



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SOME POEMS BY
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
W. HOLMAN HUNT, J. E. MILLAIS
AND DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI
PRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL
WOOD BLOCKS CUT FOR THE
MDCCCLXVI EDITION WITH
PHOTOGRAVURES FROM SOME
OF THE ORIGINAL DRAW-
INGS NOW FIRST REPRODUCED

WITH A PREFACE
BY JOSEPH PENNELL
TREATING OF THE
ILLUSTRATORS OF
THE SIXTIES & AN
INTRODUCTION BY
W. HOLMAN HUNT

LONDON: PUBLISHED IN PICCADILLY
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NOTE TO D. G. ROSSETTI'S DRAWINGS

The Publishers wish to state that the only Photographs of the Original Drawings obtainable were those taken by an amateur—a neighbour of the Artist—and are presented with all their consequent defects. It is thought however, that, imperfect as they are, they will still have a value to the Artist and the Connoisseur, to whom principally the book is intended to appeal.

THE BALLAD OF ORIANA	<i>W. Holman Hunt</i>
THE LADY OF SHALOTT	<i>Do.</i>
MARIANA IN THE SOUTH	<i>D. G. Rossetti</i>
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GODIVA	<i>W. Holman Hunt</i>
SIR GALAHAD	<i>D. G. Rossetti</i>

Preface

IT is at length beginning to be recognised that the most perfect examples of English Black-and-White, designed for the illustration of books and magazines, by wood-engraving, were produced between the years 1860 and 1870.

Already, in 1860, much more than half-a-century had passed since Bewick invented the art of wood-engraving. He and his pupils were masters. But they had to reckon with the steel-engraver, the etcher, and the lithographer. Steel-engraving and lithography were almost universally used by the best artists and engravers, during many of those years. Great work had been done on the wood, but steel-engraving was in the ascendant; from 1823, onwards, "Keepsakes," "Forget-me-nots," "Albums," "Annuals" gradually enraptured the public. The wood-engraver, who as a rule could not, like Bewick, make his own designs as well as engrave them, felt the competition so keenly that he did his best to imitate the steel-engraver, or etcher, to reproduce on his block the qualities of steel, sometimes of copper. It was a severe struggle. Not until 1856 did the vogue for steel-engraving die out with the last of the "Annuals"; not till much later did lithography suffer.

Early in the century many of Bewick's pupils had gone over to Paris, and there contributed to the development of a French—or Anglo-French—School of wood-engraving. It is not to my purpose now to point out what was accomplished by this School. But in the late Thirties one of the French books, illustrated by wood-engravings, Curmer's edition of "Paul et Virginie," had

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much to do in inducing Menzel to send his own drawings on the wood for his "Frederick the Great"—the wonderful series upon which he had just started—to be engraved by Andrew, Best, Leloir, a firm of engravers in Paris. Then, not satisfied, he trained his own school of wood-engravers, and his masterpieces followed, one after the other: "The Life of Frederick," 1840; "The Works of Frederick," 1850; "The Uniforms of the Army of Frederick," a supplement, 1852; "The Heroes of War and Peace," 1856. The books were known in England, and had their effect. The younger men saw them just at the moment when steel-engraving was on the decline, and wood-engraving supplanting it. Genius never yet meant independence of all masters; many felt the influence of Menzel, it may be unconsciously. Keene acknowledged it; so did the Dalziels. Others were not so honest or, anyhow, so outspoken. The change in the method of reproduction was no more marked than the new departure in the style of the draughtsmen who worked for the engravers. Something like a revolution in the art of Black-and-White was the result.

This revolution was first seen in William Allingham's "The Music Master," published in 1855, and illustrated by Rossetti, Millais, and Arthur Hughes. The frontispiece was Rossetti's "Maids of Elfen Mere," a design now famous as the herald of the movement. There had been nothing like it in England. Some people saw in it revolt, others infinite possibilities. The Dalziels were the engravers.

Then, in 1857 came Moxon's "Tennyson," in it evidence already of the rapid development of the new School. The illustrations present a curious medley of commonplace and originality. What was original was chiefly Pre-Raphaelite,—must be looked for in the drawings of Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt.

The same year, 1857, can claim Wilmott's "The Poets

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of the Nineteenth Century," the drawings by Madox Brown, Tenniel, Harvey, Birket Foster, Arthur Hughes, Harding, Millais, Gilbert, the engravings by the Dalziels.

Gilbert's "Shakespeare" appeared in 1858.

And 1859 is the year that "Once a Week" was started. If all other contemporary books and magazines had vanished, "Once a Week" alone would prove the greatness of this great period of English Illustration. It boasted as illustrators, first Tenniel, Millais, Keene,—some of the older school, Leech, Harvey, Hine, Brown, sharing the work with them — then, gradually, added to its contributors, Lawless, Holman Hunt, Fred Walker, Du Maurier, Green, Sandys, Shields, Whistler, Simeon Solomon, Poynter, Pinwell, Morten, Small, Crane, North, Boyd Houghton: all in the space of six years, for from 1865 it degenerated. There could be no question of its artistic success; the extraordinary thing was that it should prove a popular success as well. As early as 1860, it established itself on a firm basis, and the new School triumphed.

This is the reason 1860 is the convenient date to which to refer the movement. It had begun before that year, just as it lingered on after 1870. But it was during the intervening decade—"The Sixties"—that it was most active, most prolific, most splendid. Magazines multiplied: "Good Words" in 1860, with Orchardson, Pettie, Graham, MacWhirter for draughtsmen, not very promising in its first numbers, but eventually attracting all the brilliant men who worked for "Once a Week," and notable, above all, for Millais' "Parables," and much of the most important work of Boyd Houghton, Fred Walker, and Pinwell. The "Cornhill" also was begun in 1860, a worthy rival to "Once a Week," for in it were published, among other things, Millais' drawings for "Framley Parsonage"—the drawings that made Trollope "very proud," as well they might; Fred

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Walker's illustrations for Thackeray's "Philip"; Leighton's designs for "Romola"; in it Sandys made his first appearance as an illustrator with the "Legend of the Portent." The magazine competition grew keener with the publication of "The Quiver," "London Society," "The Shilling Magazine," "The Argosy," "The Sunday Magazine." "Punch" already flourished, despite an occasional artist on its staff. The enterprise of publishers seemed inexhaustible.

And book followed book; in 1861, Wilmott's "Sacred Poetry," with Holman Hunt, Sandys, Keene, J. D. Watson, Gilbert, Walker, among the illustrators; Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market," in 1862, with two drawings by Rossetti, two more to be added in a later edition (1866), one engraving by William Morris; in 1863, Birket Foster's "Pictures of English Landscape," and Shields' "Defoe"; in 1864, Millais' "Parables"; in 1865, Pinwell's "Goldsmith," the "Arabian Nights," chiefly by Boyd Houghton, also "Home Thoughts and Home Scenes"; in 1866, "Don Quixote," "A Round of Days," with Walker, Small, North, Pinwell, and E. Dalziel as artists; in 1867, Jean Ingelow's "Poems," and "Wayside Posies," with North, Pinwell, Small, and Dalziel again. To name all the many volumes would be to make a catalogue, but these are among the best. As the years went on, the principal difference was that the books attracted artists more than the magazines, because the conditions gave the artists a better chance in them. After 1865 the most notable work may be looked for in these books, until 1869, when, with the founding of the "Graphic"—Fildes, Gregory, Herkomer, Macbeth being some of the men of the still younger generation to appear in its early numbers—the enthusiasm seems to have been attracted into weekly channels, and the books, year by year, dwindled in number. A few were still issued—"Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass" with Tenniel's illustrations,

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are among these few ; also Christina Rossetti's "Sing-Song," illustrated by Arthur Hughes in 1872 ; and in 1876 "The Hunting of the Shark" by Henry Holiday, and Thornbury's "Historical and Legendary Ballads," containing, among other fine things, the two or three beautiful drawings by Whistler that to Thornbury were so "startling" and "daring," though they are reprinted from "Once a Week"; at last, as a fitting conclusion of the whole movement, Dalziel's "Bible Gallery," the publication delayed for one reason or another, mainly that the original designs might be photographed on the block, and so preserved, until 1881, though the drawings had been made long before.

To the artists belongs the artistic glory. The engravers were principally the large firms of Dalziel and Swain ; they not only engraved the drawings, but commissioned the artists, even the authors, set up and printed illustrations and type, and then sold the volume to the publishers, usually Routledge, Ward & Lock, or one or two other firms, who put their name on title-page and cover. The work was so completely the engravers', that many of the books are best known as "Dalziel's Illustrated Editions." Of course they employed many assistants. Men like Linton and Hooper were responsible for a number of the blocks. What artists thought of the results obtained, we know. Rossetti was dissatisfied with Dalziel, was better pleased with Linton, in which it is not easy to agree with him. Keene complained that his work fell before the graver of Swain. Fred Walker was more amiable, though free enough with his corrections. The tendency now is to go to the other extreme from Keene and Rossetti, and to over-estimate the engravers' work. There are critics who will tell you they would rather have the print than the drawing. But the truth is that the drawing suffered terribly. Where the original designs have survived, there is the chance to compare them with the

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engravings, and to see how much subtlety and nervous force in the artist's line, how much of its spontaneity and freshness, was lost in the mechanical line of the engraver. Skilful, well-trained, and conscientious as were the Dalziels and Swain, and the craftsmen who collaborated with them, they were not as successful in giving a faithful *fac-simile* as the American engravers who came to the fore in the Eighties, nor had they the individuality, the genius really, of artists like Cole, Lepère, Florian, who are still at work to-day.

The beauty of the illustrations, the qualities for which they are now prized, we owe, then, to the draughtsmen. And yet, while we still have the engravings—become rare only in a few cases—the artists' original designs, except those done toward the end of the period, have gone forever. They drew on the wood; the drawing disappeared in the engraving. Eventually, photography came to their aid. As soon as it was possible, the engravers, like Swain and the Dalziels, who had the intelligence to appreciate a good thing when they saw it, did what could be done to save the drawing. The design, before they touched it, was photographed, and in some instances the photograph has survived. Or it was photographed from one block to another and the original block preserved, to the present delight of the collector when he chances upon it in a saleroom or a second-hand shop. Complete emancipation came when the draughtsman was allowed to draw on paper, and the drawing was then transferred to the block by photography. There is reason to be thankful for the examples of Sandys, Boyd Houghton, Pinwell, North, that have thus escaped.

In the first excitement over photography and the photographic processes, the men of the Sixties and their work were forgotten. But not for long. Illustrators of the Nineties working according to the new conditions, occasionally, some-

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how, referred to an old number of the "Graphic," or an odd volume of "Once a Week" picked up from a twopenny box at a bookstall. This set them to study more systematically other work of the period. They began to talk about it. People began to remember vaguely that they had been brought up on these very illustrations in their childhood. In a word, interest was revived. The thing was in the air, until now, as I have said, the fact of the importance of the "Black-and-White" of forty years ago is fully recognised by a few people.

But, though this is so; though museums, foreign and colonial, compete for the rare original drawings which remain on the blocks unengraved, or the studies for these drawings, or the replicas of them made by the artists; though, only recently, the Government has attempted an historical exhibition of as many examples as could most easily be got together without too much trouble for the officials; though lives of the artists have been published and endeavours made to catalogue their works; though bulky volumes and ponderous essays have been written about the illustrations of the period, which I once incautiously called "The Sixties: the Golden Age of English Illustration";—yet, if the artist, the amateur, or the collector wishes to see these treasures, he must hunt for them mostly not on the walls of the English National or local Art Galleries, but in the pages either of forgotten sixpenny magazines, or between the gaudy covers of a score or more of gift books. The books are in the British Museum, but those who care for them have pursued their researches rather in the second-hand shop of the suburbs and the barrows of Whitechapel and Farringdon Street. Possibly the pleasure of possessing the volumes has been increased by the miles we have tramped, and the few pence we have paid for them. They still are to be found, but, at last, the

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book-collector is waking up, the amateur is abroad, and even proofs are being pulled from electrotypes, and sham original drawings being manufactured.

The one thing that has not been done is to collect the best wood-engravings in the best books, and, with the aid of fair paper and good press work, to present, in beautiful form, these masterpieces of British art. The engravings are good, the drawings masterly, but the books and magazines in which they appeared are abominable, the worst specimens produced anywhere of artless, but pretentious book-making. The paper is vile; in too many copies of too many publications I have seen, it is spotting and discolouring—and this does not mean that it is merely, like the paper in earlier books, acquiring the fine tone of old age. The binding is even worse; the design on the cover is usually as vulgar as the designs within are superb, while the stitching is not even workmanlike enough to hold the sheets together. The type is mean, and there is absolutely no thought for the harmonious proportions and spacing of a beautiful page. To attempt then to do what never has been done before—that is, to attempt not only to show the drawings, but to show them as they deserve to be shown with the advantage of good paper and good type, careful printing, decent binding, and some respect for the page—will be the aim of this series of “The Books of the Sixties.”

Several collections of the prints have already been published. Thornbury’s “Historical and Legendary Ballads” is one of the most notable. The publishers and engravers of the period often re-issued the works of certain artists from their magazines and papers to produce a new volume, and thus we have the “Cornhill Gallery,” Millais’ “Collected Illustrations,” Walker’s “Pictures,” Keene’s “Our People,” Millais’ “Parables,” which first appeared in “Good Words,”

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the "Graphic Portfolio," to mention a few of the most important. But they are all cumbersome, expensive, and often artless productions. Few have lived; fewer, I imagine, were a success from the publisher's standpoint. There is also one book that has been reprinted several times, and even issued lately by Messrs Macmillan on good paper, with the drawings printed from the original blocks on India; this book is Moxon's "Tennyson." But, though it contains some of the finest work of the period, it is overloaded with many engravings of little or no value, and in the present series the intention is to include only the very best illustrations that appeared in the "Books of the Sixties," together with the original text the artist illustrated.

Another feature of the series is that the Introduction to each volume will be written by an artist who has either been associated with the work, or who is in special sympathy with it. In the case of a book like Moxon's "Tennyson," nothing could be more interesting than to have the history of the enterprise, or the individual artist's share in it, from one of the Pre-Raphaelites to whom it owed its chief distinction. If Millais and Rossetti can no longer add to our knowledge, Mr Holman Hunt fortunately can, and his words on the subject must have an unusual value. But in each volume the Introduction will come from an artist, equally competent, though perhaps for other reasons, to speak.

A beautiful frame is a part of a beautiful work of art; a fine drawing calls for a fine page and a setting worthy of it. Now at last, the pictures and text of the Sixties will be seen on good paper, with care and attention devoted to every detail of the book, the drawings printed from the original wood blocks; and if, as a result, the illustrations prove almost unrecognisable, it will only be because of their increased, or rather their original beauty now fully revealed for the first time.



Introduction

BEING in Jerusalem in the year 1855, I received notice from Millais that Mr Moxon was undertaking the publication of an illustrated edition of Tennyson's Works, that Millais had already begun to make designs, and that he had been requested to ask me to join in the undertaking. He told me also that Rossetti had been invited to contribute, together with the principal artists of the day. I rejoiced at the prospect of taking my part in the project, and began to consider whether in some of the poems of Oriental story I could not use my special opportunities, and I made experimental sketches at once. Certain poems had already been assigned to other artists, but the "Recollections of the Arabian Nights" was not amongst these. I was at the time making plans for leaving Jerusalem, and hoped that my proposed journey through northern cities, including Damascus to the Lebanon, and Constantinople, would provide me with specially appropriate material.

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arid wastes, enriched as the region is with crystal streams, and glorious with the colour of blossoming fruit trees, it fully justifies the name of the Earthly Paradise given to it by Mahomet. Although Damascus failed to yield me so many features as I had hoped to find suitable to small designs, yet the pendentive roofed recess used by me for the throne of Haroun al Raschid I obtained in one of the palaces of the city associated with the great kaliph so glorious in romance and so inglorious in history. Other fascinating features of this then unspoilt city of the East were not available for my immediate purpose.

I pursued my way to Constantinople, and there the caiques on the Bosphorus furnished me with the form of the boat for the Dreamer floating down the Tigris in Tennyson's poem; and the mosque domes, and minarets in the background of the drawing, I designed from those in Stamboul. Intimate study of Orientalism served me in other particulars for the two illustrations of the Arabian poem.

On my return to England, having already claimed the poem of the "Lady of Shalott" for illustration—which I did the more as a matter of course that I had already made preliminary designs for it—I at once began my work on the subject of the Curse

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falling upon the Lady of the lonely tower, she being the evident impersonation of a Soul entrusted with an artistic gift destined to bring about a great end, who, failing in constancy, is overwhelmed by the ruin of her life's ideal.

When the publisher saw that I was making progress, he represented to me that he was in great distress, because Rossetti, having promised to do several illustrations for poems reserved for him, did not execute them, neither would he see Moxon on the subject; he appealed to me to use my influence to persuade my Pre-Raphaelite Brother to fulfil his engagement. Rossetti was not at that time so well known to the public as either Millais or myself, but he had escaped the continuing animosity of the critics, for on experiencing their first rancour he had discreetly withdrawn altogether from public exhibition. We had faced the evil, and had therefore increased the prejudice against us. I made it my business to see Gabriel, and asked why he delayed to execute the drawings. His reply was that all the best subjects were now taken, and that he did not care for any that were left. I referred to many, such as the "Palace of Art," the "Morte d'Arthur," and others, as poems with great artistic opportunities, and still available. He demurred,

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saying that what he had wanted was the “Lady of Shalott.” I showed him my drawing in progress, and explained that I had chosen the subject, the more because the design I had made some years ago, already known to him, incorporating part of my idea, had been begged by a friend, with understanding that it was to be kept private until I could paint the picture of it as it was my intention to do. It was the age of albums, when every lady appealed to her friends to add some elegant scrap to her collection. The general contributor was content to write in a beautiful penmanship a stanza from Byron or Moore, with his own signature beneath it; the artist could not acquit himself so easily. My friend probably attributed to false modesty my stipulation that the design should not while in his care be seen in its incomplete form. I was truly dismayed when I heard it was framed and hung up for anybody to see, so that my conception was fast losing its freshness, and even in danger of being plagiarised. I said, however, to Rossetti, “If you wish it very much I will give up to you the subject I had intended to treat of, the later part of the story of the ‘Lady of Shalott,’” and he was thus persuaded to see Moxon with a view to embarking on his work.

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The price which the publisher paid to all contributors was £25 for each design, but from William Rossetti we learn that his brother stipulated for £30 as his price. "Godiva," "Oriana," and "Cophetua" I still kept, and completed these designs before returning to other work urgently awaiting me.

I did not have photographs taken of all my completed drawings before they were cut. Those from the "Lady of Shalott," "Lady Godiva," and "Oriana" I still possess; comparison of these with the impressions in the book more than accounts for the disappointment I felt when at first I saw my designs in Moxon's volume. A certain wirelike character in all the lines was to me, as to all artists with like experience, eminently disenchanting. Undoubtedly each block had been cut with care and skill, but in a few cases I had to have parts removed, and drew details over again on the newly inserted wood. Over those drawings of which no photographs were made, I had less power of correction.

The book itself was an apple of discord with the public. In trying to please all, the publisher satisfied neither section of book buyers. The greater proportion were in favour of the work done by prominent artists of the old school, and their ad-

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mirers were scandalised by the incorporation of designs by members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood; while our fewer appreciators would not buy the book in which the preponderance of work was by artists they did not approve. Thus the unfortunate book never found favour until after Moxon's ruin and death, when it passed into other hands and was sold at a reduced price. The change of feeling which the republication of our designs indicates may encourage some young artists, whose ideas do not receive immediate recognition from the world.

W. HOLMAN HUNT.



Mariana

“Mariana in the moated grange.”—*Measure for Measure*.

I

WITH blackest moss the flower-plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all :
The rusted nails fell from the knots
That held the peach to the garden-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange :
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.
She only said, “ My life is dreary,
He cometh not,” she said ;
She said, “ I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! ”

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II

Her tears fell with the dews at even ;
Her tears fell ere the dews were dried ;
She could not look on the sweet heaven,
Either at morn or eventide.
After the flitting of the bats,
When thickest dark did trance the sky,
She drew her casement-curtain by,
And glanced athwart the glooming flats.
She only said, " The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! "

III

Upon the middle of the night,
Waking she heard the night-fowl crow :
The cock sung out an hour ere light :
From the dark fen the oxen's low
Came to her : without hope of change,
In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn,
Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn
About the lonely moated grange.
She only said, " The day is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! "







MARIANA

IV

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark :
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, " My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! "

V

And ever when the moon was low,
And the shrill winds were up and away,
In the white curtain, to and fro,
She saw the gusty shadow sway.
But when the moon was very low,
And wild winds bound within their cell,
The shadow of the poplar fell
Upon her bed, across her brow,
She only said, " The night is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! "

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VI

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd ;
The blue fly sung in the pane ; the mouse
Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd,
Or from the crevice peer'd about.
Old faces glimmer'd thro' the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices called her from without.
She only said, " My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said ;
She said, " I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead ! "

VII

The sparrow's chirrup on the roof,
The slow clock ticking, and the sound
Which to the wooing wind aloof
The poplar made, did all confound
Her sense ; but most she loathed the hour
When the thick-moted sunbeam lay
Athwart the chambers, and the day
Was sloping toward his western bower.
Then, said she, " I am very dreary,
He will not come," she said ;
She wept, " I am aweary, aweary,
Oh God, that I were dead ! "



Recollections of the Arabian Nights

I

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
 The forward-flowing tide of time ;
And many a sheeny summer-morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

II

A night my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue :
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side :
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

III

Often, where clear-stemm'd platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.

A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

IV

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I enter'd, from the clearer light,
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the dome
Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

V

Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rilles musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seem'd to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow,
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

VI

Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-colour'd shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odour in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

VII

Far off, and where the lemon-grove
In closest coverture upsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;
Not he : but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,
Apart from place, withholding time,
But flattering the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

VIII

Black the garden-bowers and grotts
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
A sudden splendour from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

IX

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame :
So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
Entrancèd with that place and time,
So worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

X

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound.
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
 Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

XI

With dazed vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,
Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
 After the fashion of the time,
 And humour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

XII

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers look'd to shame
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time,
To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

XIII

Then stole I up, and trancedly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tressed with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;
The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

XIV

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpropt a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd,
With merriment of kingly pride,
 Sole star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
 THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID !



The Ballad of Oriana

I

MY heart is wasted with my woe,
Oriana.

There is no rest for me below,
Oriana.

When the long dun wolds are ribb'd with snow ;
And loud the Norland whirlwinds blow,
Oriana,

Alone I wander to and fro,
Oriana.

II

Ere the light on dark was growing,
Oriana,

At midnight the cock was crowing,
Oriana :

Winds were blowing, waters flowing,
We heard the steeds to battle going,
Oriana ;

Aloud the hollow bugle blowing,
Oriana.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

III

In the yew-wood black as night,
 Oriana,
Ere I rode into the fight,
 Oriana,
While blissful tears blinded my sight
By star-shine and by moonlight,
 Oriana,
I to thee my troth did plight,
 Oriana.

IV

She stood upon the castle wall,
 Oriana :
She watch'd my crest among them all,
 Oriana :
She saw me fight, she heard me call,
When forth there stept a foeman tall,
 Oriana,
Atween me and the castle wall,
 Oriana.

V

The bitter arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
The false, false arrow went aside,
 Oriana :
The damned arrow glanced aside,
And pierced thy heart, my love, my bride
 Oriana !
Thy heart, my life, my love, my bride,
 Oriana !



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THE BALLAD OF ORIANA

VI

Oh ! narrow, narrow was the space,
Oriana.
Loud, loud rung out the bugle's brays,
Oriana.
Oh ! deathful stabs were dealt apace,
The battle deepen'd in its place,
Oriana ;
But I was down upon my face,
Oriana.

VII

They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana !
How could I rise and come away,
Oriana ?
How could I look upon the day ?
They should have stabb'd me where I lay,
Oriana—
They should have trod me into clay,
Oriana.

VIII

O breaking heart that will not break,
Oriana !
O pale, pale face so sweet and meek,
Oriana !
Thou smilest, but thou dost not speak,
And then the tears run down my cheek,
Oriana :
What wantest thou ? whom dost thou seek,
Oriana ?

POEMS BY TENNYSON

IX

I cry aloud : none hear my cries,
Oriana.
Thou comest atween me and the skies,
Oriana.
I feel the tears of blood arise
Up from my heart unto my eyes,
Oriana.
Within thy heart my arrow lies,
Oriana. |

X

O cursed hand ! O cursed blow !
Oriana !
O happy thou that liest low,
Oriana !
All night the silence seems to flow
Beside me in my utter woe,
Oriana.
A weary, weary way I go,
Oriana.

XI

When Norland winds pipe down the sea,
Oriana,
I walk, I dare not think of thee,
Oriana.
Thou liest beneath the greenwood tree,
I dare not die and come to thee,
Oriana.
I hear the roaring of the sea,
Oriana.





The Lady of Shalott

PART I

I

ON either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
And thro' the field the road runs by
To many-tower'd Camelot ;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
The island of Shalott.

II

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
Flowing down to Camelot.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
The Lady of Shalott.

III

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses ; and unhail'd
The shallop flietteth silken-sail'd
Skimming down to Camelot :
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
Or at the casement seen her stand ?
Or is she known in all the land,
The Lady of Shalott ?

IV

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
Down to tower'd Camelot :
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott."

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART II

I

THERE she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,

The Lady of Shalott.

II

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near

Winding down to Camelot :

POEMS BY TENNYSON

There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

III

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two :
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

IV

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,
For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights,
And music, went to Camelot :
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed ;
“ I am half-sick of shadows,” said
The Lady of Shalott.



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THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART III

I

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a Lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

II

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot :
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

III

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

IV

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

V

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART IV

I

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

II

And down the river's dim expanse—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

III

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

IV

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,

Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,

The Lady of Shalott.

V

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.



THE LADY OF SHALOTT

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

VI

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
 All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, "She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
 The Lady of Shalott."

Mariana in the South

WITH one black shadow at its feet,
The house thro' all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines :
A faint blue ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and inlets bright.
But "Ave Mary," made she moan,
And "Ave Mary," night and morn,
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

She, as her carol sadder grew,
From brow and bosom slowly down
Thro' rosy taper fingers drew
Her streaming curls of deepest brown
To left and right, and made appear
Still lighted in a sacred shrine,
Her melancholy eyes divine,
The home of woe without a tear.

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH

And "Ave Mary," was her moan,
"Madonna, sad is night and morn;"
And "Ah," she sang, "to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn."

Till all the crimson changed and past
Into deep orange o'er the sea,
Low on her knees herself she cast,
Before Our Lady murmur'd she ;
Complaining, "Mother, give me grace
To help me of my weary load."
And on the liquid mirror glow'd
The clear perfection of her face.
"Is this the form," she made her moan,
"That won his praises night and morn?"
And "Ah," she said, "but I wake alone,
I sleep forgotten, I wake forlorn."

Nor bird would sing, nor lamb would bleat,
Nor any cloud would cross the vault,
But day increased from heat to heat,
On stony drought and steaming salt ;
Till now at noon she slept again,
And seem'd knee-deep in mountain grass,
And heard her native breezes pass,
And runlets babbling down the glen.
She breathed in sleep a lower moan,
And murmuring as at night and morn,
She thought, "My spirit is here alone,
Walks forgotten, and is forlorn."

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Dreaming, she knew it was a dream :
She felt he was and was not there.
She woke : the babble of a stream
Fell, and, without, the steady glare
Shrank one sick willow sere and small.
The river-bed was dusty-white ;
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall.
She whisper'd, with a stifled moan
More inward than at night or morn,
“Sweet Mother, let me not here alone
Live forgotten and die forlorn.”

And, rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
For “Love,” they said, “must needs be true,
To what is loveliest upon earth.”
An image seem'd to pass the door.
To look at her with slight, and say,
“But now thy beauty flows away,
So be alone for evermore.”
“O cruel heart,” she changed her tone,
“And cruel love, whose end is scorn,
Is this the end to be left alone,
To live forgotten, and die forlorn !”

But sometimes in the falling day
An image seem'd to pass the door,
To look into her eyes and say,
“But thou shalt be alone no more.”

MARIANA IN THE SOUTH

And flaming downward over all
From heat to heat the day decreased,
And slowly rounded to the east
The one black shadow from the wall.
“The day to night,” she made her moan,
“The day to night, the night to morn,
And day and night I am left alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn.”

At eve a dry cicala sung,
There came a sound as of the sea ;
Backward the lattice-blind she flung,
And leaned upon the balcony.
There all in spaces rosy-bright
Large Hesper glitter'd on her tears,
And deepening thro' the silent spheres,
Heaven over Heaven rose the night.
And weeping then she made her moan,
“The night comes on that knows not morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten, and love forlorn,”

The Miller's Daughter

I

I SEE the wealthy miller yet,
 His double chin, his portly size,
And who that knew him could forget
 The busy wrinkles round his eyes?
The slow wise smile that, round about
 His dusty forehead drily curl'd,
Seem'd half within and half without,
 And full of dealings with the world?

II

In yonder chair I see him sit,
 Three fingers round the old silver cup—
I see his gray eyes twinkle yet
 At his own jest—gray eyes lit up
With summer lightnings of a soul
 So full of summer warmth, so glad,
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole,
 His memory scarce can make me sad.



THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

III

Yet fill my glass : give me one kiss :
 My own sweet Alice, we must die.
There 's somewhat in this world amiss
 Shall be unriddled by and by.
There 's somewhat flows to us in life,
 But more is taken quite away.
Pray, Alice, pray, my darling wife,
 That we may die the self-same day.

IV

Have I not found a happy earth ?
 I least should breathe a thought of pain.
Would God renew me from my birth
 I 'd almost live my life again.
So sweet it seems with thee to walk,
 And once again to woo thee mine—
It seems in after-dinner talk
 Across the walnuts and the wine—

V

To be the long and listless boy
 Late-left an orphan of the squire,
Where this old mansion mounted high
 Looks down upon the village spire :
For even here, where I and you
 Have lived and loved alone so long,
Each morn my sleep was broken thro'
 By some young skylark's matin song.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

VI

And oft I heard the tender dove
In firry woodlands making moan ;
But ere I saw your eyes, my love,
I had no motion of my own.
For scarce my life with fancy play'd
Before I dream'd that pleasant dream—
Still hither thither idly sway'd
Like those long mosses in the stream.

VII

Or from the bridge I lean'd to hear
The milldam rushing down with noise,
And see the minnows everywhere
In crystal eddies dance and poise,
The tall flag-flowers when they sprung
Below the range of stepping stones,
Or those three chestnuts near, that hung
In masses thick with milky cones.

VIII

But, Alice, what an hour was that
When after roving in the woods
('Twas April then), I came and sat
Below the chestnuts, when their buds
Were glistening to the breezy blue ;
And on the slope, an absent fool,
I cast me down, nor thought of you,
But angled in the higher pool.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

IX

A love-song I had somewhere read,
An echo from a measured strain,
Beat time to nothing in my head
From some odd corner of the brain.
It haunted me, the morning long,
With weary sameness in the rhymes,
The phantom of a silent song,
That went and came a thousand times.

X

Then leapt a trout. In lazy mood
I watch'd the little circles die ;
They past into the level flood,
And there a vision caught my eye ;
The reflex of a beauteous form,
A glowing arm, a gleaming neck,
As when a sunbeam wavers warm
Within the dark and dimpled beck.

XI

For you remember, you had set,
That morning, on the casement's edge
A long green box of mignonette,
And you were leaning from the ledge :
And when I raised my eyes, above
They met with two so full and bright—
Such eyes ! I swear to you, my love,
That these have never lost their light.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

XII

I loved, and love dispell'd the fear
That I should die an early death :
For love possess'd the atmosphere,
And fill'd the breast with purer breath.
My mother thought, What ails the boy ?
For I was alter'd, and began
To move about the house with joy,
And with the certain step of man.

XIII

I loved the brimming wave that swam
Thro' quiet meadows round the mill,
The sleepy pool above the dam,
The pool beneath it never still,
The meal-sacks on the whiten'd floor,
The dark round of the dripping wheel,
The very air about the door
Made misty with the floating meal.

XIV

And oft in ramblings on the wold,
When April nights began to blow,
And April's crescent glimmer'd cold,
I saw the village lights below ;
I knew your taper far away,
And full at heart of trembling hope,
From off the wold I came, and lay
Upon the freshly-flower'd slope.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

XV

The deep brook groan'd beneath the mill ;
And "by the lamp," I thought, "she sits!"
The white chalk-quarry from the hill
Gleam'd to the flying moon by fits.
"O that I were beside her now !
O will she answer if I call ?
O would she give me vow for vow,
Sweet Alice, if I told her all ?"

XVI

Sometimes I saw you sit and spin ;
And, in the pauses of the wind,
Sometimes I heard you sing within ;
Sometimes your shadow cross'd the blind.
At last you rose and moved the light,
And the long shadow of the chair
Flitted across into the night,
And all the casement darken'd there.

XVII

But when at last I dared to speak,
The lanes, you know, were white with May,
Your white lips moved not, but your cheek
Flush'd like the coming of the day ;
And so it was—half-sly, half-shy,
You would, and would not, little one !
Although I pleaded tenderly,
And you and I were all alone.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

XVIII

And slowly was my mother brought
To yield consent to my desire :
She wish'd me happy, but she thought
I might have look'd a little higher ;
And I was young—too young to wed :
“ Yet must I love her for your sake ;
Go fetch your Alice here,” she said :
Her eyelid quiver'd as she spake.

XIX

And down I went to fetch my bride :
But, Alice, you were ill at ease ;
This dress and that by turns you tried,
Too fearful that you should not please.
I loved you better for your fears,
I knew you could not look but well ;
And dews, that would have fall'n in tears,
I kiss'd away before they fell.

XX

I watch'd the little flutterings,
The doubt my mother would not see ;
She spoke at large of many things,
And at the last she spoke of me ;
And turning look'd upon your face,
As near this door you sat apart,
And rose, and with a silent grace
Approaching, press'd you heart to heart.





THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

XXI

Ah, well—but sing the foolish song
I gave you, Alice, on the day
When, arm in arm, we went along,
A pensive pair, and you were gay
With bridal flowers—that I may seem,
As in the nights of old, to lie
Beside the mill-wheel in the stream,
While those full chestnuts whisper by.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

XXII

A trifle, sweet! which true love spells—
True love interprets—right alone.
His light upon the letter dwells,
For all the spirit is his own.
So, if I waste words now, in truth
You must blame Love. His early rage
Had force to make me rhyme in youth
And makes me talk too much in age.

XXIII

And now those vivid hours are gone,
Like mine own life to me thou art,
Where Past and Present, wound in one
Do make a garland for the heart:
So sing that other song I made,
Half-anger'd with my happy lot,
The day, when in the chestnut shade
I found the blue Forget-me-not.

Love that hath us in the net,
Can he pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set.
Many a chance the years beget.
Love the gift is Love the debt:
Even so.

THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

Love is hurt with jar and fret.
Love is made a vague regret.
Eyes with idle tears are wet.
Idle habits link us yet.
What is love? for we forget:
 Ah, no! no!

XXIV

Look thro' mine eyes with thine. True wife,
 Round my true heart thine arms entwine ;
My other dearer life in life,
 Look thro' my very soul with thine !
Untouch'd with any shade of years,
 May those kind eyes for ever dwell !
They have not shed a many tears,
 Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

XXV

Yet tears they shed : they had their part
 Of sorrow : for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
 Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness past again,
 And left a want unknown before ;
Although the loss that brought us pain,
 That loss but made us love the more,

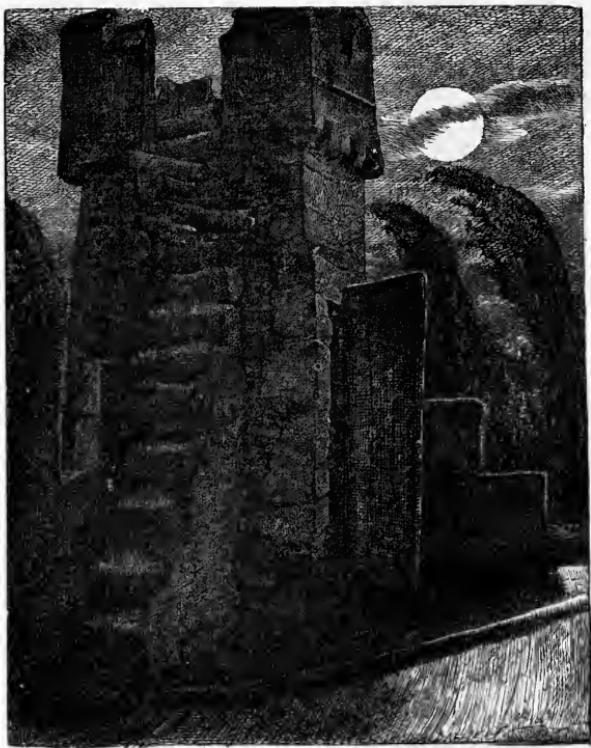
POEMS BY TENNYSON

XXVI

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee :
But that God bless thee, dear—who wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind—
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

XXVII

Arise, and let us wander forth,
To yon old mill across the wolds ;
For look, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
And fires your narrow casement glass,
Touching the sullen pool below :
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
Is dry and dewless. Let us go.



The Sisters

I

WE were two daughters of one race :
She was the fairest in the face :
 The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
They were together, and she fell ;
Therefore revenge became me well,
 O the Earl was fair to see !

II

She died : she went to burning flame :
She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.
 The wind is howling in turret and tree.
Whole weeks and months, and early and late,
To win his love I lay in wait :
 O the Earl was fair to see !

III

I made a feast ; I bade him come ;
I won his love, I brought him home.
 The wind is roaring in turret and tree.
And after supper, on a bed,
Upon my lap he laid his head :
 O the Earl was fair to see !

POEMS BY TENNYSON

IV

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest :
His ruddy cheek upon my breast.
The wind is raging in turret and tree.
I hated him with the hate of hell,
But I loved his beauty passing well.
O the Earl was fair to see !

V

I rose up in the silent night :
I made my dagger sharp and bright.
The wind is raving in turret and tree.
As half-asleep his breath he drew,
Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
O the Earl was fair to see !

VI

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
He look'd so grand when he was dead.
The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
I wrapt his body in the sheet,
And laid him at his mother's feet.
O the Earl was fair to see !







The Palace of Art

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
I said, "O Soul, make merry and carouse,
Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnish'd brass,
I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
From level meadow-bases of deep grass
Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
My soul would live alone unto herself
In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and round," I said,
"Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stedfast shade
Sleeps on his luminous ring."

POEMS BY TENNYSON

To which my soul made answer readily :
 " Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
In this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So royal-rich and wide."

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Four courts I made, East, West and South, North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherfrom
The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty woods,
Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods.

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,
Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
In misty folds, that floating as they fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

THE PALACE OF ART

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
A cloud of incense of all odour steam'd
From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, " And who shall gaze upon
My palace with unblinded eyes,
While this great bow will waver in the sun,
And that sweet incense rise? "

For that sweet incense rose and never fail'd,
And, while day sank or mounted higher
The light aërial gallery, golden-rail'd,
Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd and traced,
Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
From shadow'd grots of arches interlaced,
And tipt with frost-like spires.

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Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
Thro' which the livelong day my soul did pass,
Well pleased, from room to room.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Full of great rooms and small the palace stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green and blue,
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
Where with puff'd cheek the belted hunter blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of sand,
 And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
 Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry waves.
 You seem'd to hear them climb and fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing caves,
 Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
 By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
 With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil.
 In front they bound the sheaves. Behind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
 And hoary to the wind.

THE PALACE OF ART

And one, a foreground black with stones and slags,
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the scornful crags,
 And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twilight pour'd
 On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
 A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
 As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was there,
 Not less than truth design'd.

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* * * * *

Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
 In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costly sardonyx
 Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
 Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St. Cecily ;
 An angel look'd at her.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise,
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

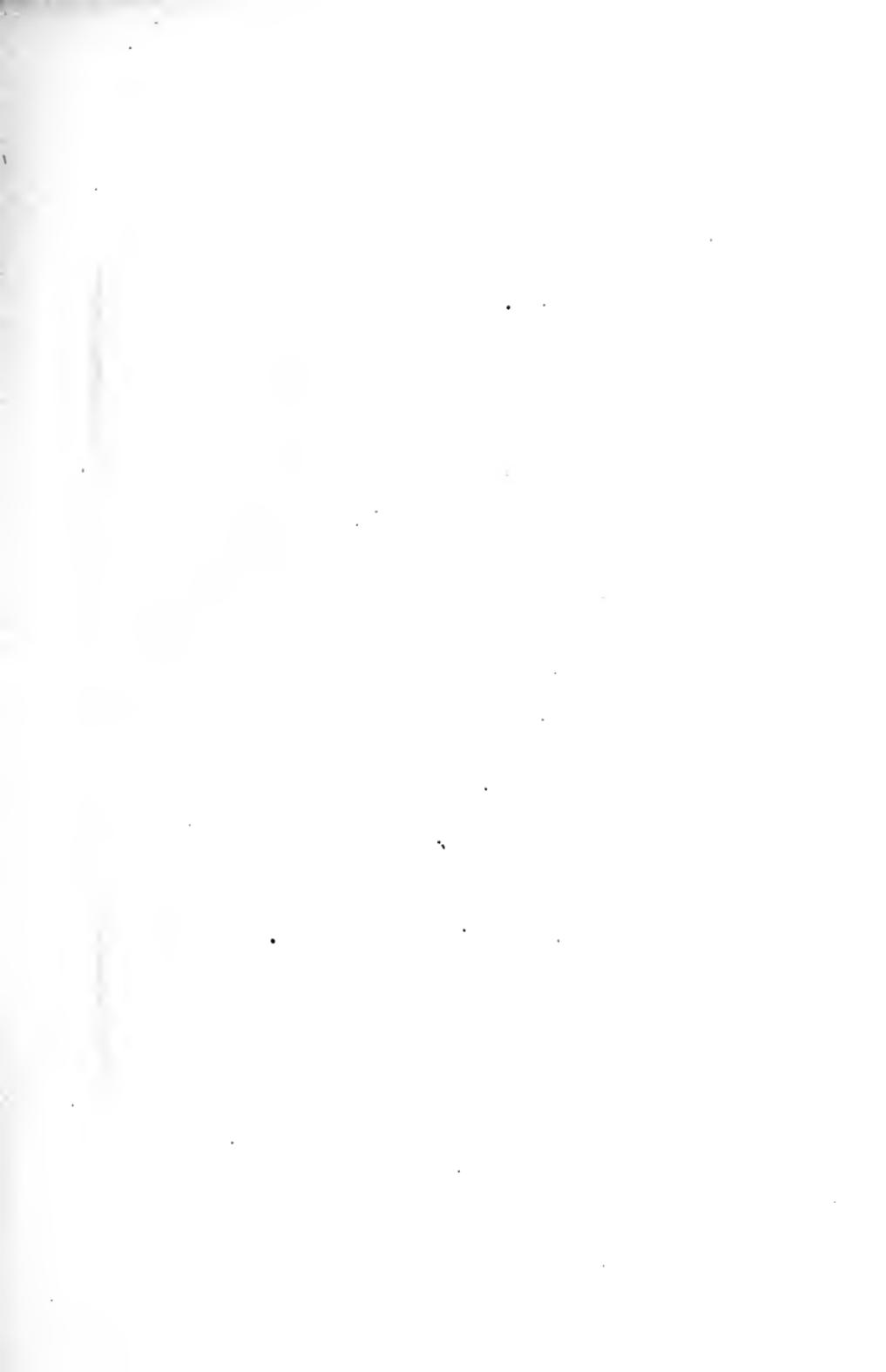
Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blue unclasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne :
From one hand droop'd a crocus : one hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.









THE PALACE OF ART

Nor these alone : but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

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Then in the towers I placed great bells that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver sound ;
And with choice paintings of wise men I hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild ;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest ;
A million wrinkles carved his skin ;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and stings ;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings ;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod : and those great bells
Began to chime. She took her throne :
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost Oriels' colour'd flame
Two godlike faces gazed below ;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names, that in their motion were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd fair
In diverse raiment strange :

THE PALACE OF ART

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, emerald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone ;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five ;

Communing with herself: " All these are mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me." She—when young night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven ; and clapt her hands and cried,
" I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich, and wide,
Be flatter'd to the height.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“O all things fair to sate my various eyes !
O shapes and hues that please me well !
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell !

“O god-like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of swine
That range on yonder plain.

“In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep ;
And oft some brainless devil enter in,
And drives them to the deep.”

Then of the moral instinct would she prate,
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd Fate ;
And at the last she said :

“I take possession of man's mind and deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.”

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THE PALACE OF ART

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she threw and prosper'd : so three years
She prosper'd : on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she turn'd her sight,
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote "Mene, mene," and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was born
Scorn of herself ; again, from out that mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

"What ! is not this my place of strength," she said,
" My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones were laid
Since my first memory ?"

POEMS BY TENNYSON

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes ; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my soul,
'Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal.

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of sand ;
Left on the shore ; that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from the land
Their moon-led waters white.

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing saw
The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had curl'd.
" No voice," she shriek'd in that lone hall,
" No voice breaks thro' the stillness of this world :
One deep, deep silence all ! "

THE PALACE OF ART

She, mouldering with the dull earth's mouldering sod,
Inwrapt tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere ;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime :

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully sound
Of human footsteps fall.

As in strange lands a traveller walking slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moon-rise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder or a sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, "I have found
A new land, but I die."

POEMS BY TENNYSON

She howl'd aloud, "I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
She threw her royal robes away.
"Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
"Where I may mourn and pray."

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that are
So lightly, beautifully built:
Perchance I may return with others there
When I have purged my guilt."

A Dream of Fair Women

I READ, before my eyelids dropt their shade,
“*The Legend of Good Women*,” long ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who made
His music heard below ;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts, that fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his art
Held me above the subject, as strong gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho’ my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in hand
The downward slope to death.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Those far-renowned brides of ancient song

Peopled the hollow dark, like burning stars,
And I heard sounds of insult, shame, and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clanging hoofs :

And I saw crowds in column'd sanctuaries ;
And forms that pass'd at windows and on roofs
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold ; heroes tall

Dislodging pinnacle and parapet
Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall ;
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues of fire ;
White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and masts,
And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
 Resolved on noble things, and strove to speak,
As when a great thought strikes along the brain,
 And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
 A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,
That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;
 And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing thought
 Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and did creep
Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd, and brought
 Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd far
 In an old wood : fresh-wash'd in coolest dew,
The maiden splendours of the morning star
 Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree-boles did stoop and lean
 Upon the dusky brushwood underneath
Their broad curved branches, fledged with clearest green,
 New from its silken sheath.

The dim red morn had died, her journey done,
 And with dead lips smiled at the twilight plain,
Half-fall'n across the threshold of the sun,
 Never to rise again.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

There was no motion in the dumb dead air,
Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre
Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jasmine turn'd
Their humid arms festooning tree to tree,
And at the root thro' lush green grasses burn'd
The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I knew
The tearful glimmer of the languid dawn
On those long, rank, dark wood-walks drench'd in dew
Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and frame
The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear under-tone
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unblissful clime :
"Pass freely thro': the wood is all thine own,
Until the end of time."

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stiller than chisell'd marble, standing there ;
A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

Her loveliness with shame and with surprise
Froze my swift speech : she turning on my face
The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place.

“I had great beauty : ask thou not my name :
No one can be more wise than destiny.
Many drew swords and died. Where'er I came
I brought calamity.”

“No marvel, sovereign lady : in fair field
Myself for such a face had boldly died,”
I answer'd free ; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks averse,
To her full height her stately stature draws ;
“My youth,” she said, “was blasted with a curse :
This woman was the cause.

“I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears :
My father held his hand upon his face ;
I, blinded with my tears,

“Still strove to speak : my voice was thick with sighs
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“The high masts flicker’d as they lay afloat ;
The crowds, the temples, waver’d, and the shore ;
The bright death quiver’d at the victim’s throat ;
Touch’d ; and I knew no more.”

Whereto the other with a downward brow :
“ I would the white cold heavy-plunging foam,
Whirl’d by the wind, had rolled me deep below,
Then when I left my home.”

Her slow full words sank thro’ the silence drear,
As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea :
Sudden I heard a voice that cried, “ Come here,
That I may look on thee.”

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf unroll’d ;
A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold black eyes,
Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, began :
“ I govern’d men by change, and so I sway’d
All moods. ’Tis long since I have seen a man.
Once, like the moon, I made

“The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and flow.
I have no men to govern in this wood :
That makes my only woe.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

“Nay—yet it chafes me that I could not bend
One will ; nor tame and tutor with mine eye
That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee, friend,
Where is Mark Antony ?

“The man, my lover, with whom I rode sublime
On Fortune’s neck : we sat as God by God :
The Nilus would have risen before his time
And flooded at our nod.

“We drank the Libyan sun to sleep, and lit
Lamps which outburn’d Canopus. O my life
In Egypt ! O the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

“And the wild kiss, when fresh from war’s alarms,
My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leapt into my arms,
Contented there to die !

“And there he died : and when I heard my name
Sigh’d forth with life I would not brook my fear
Of the other : with a worm I balk’d his fame
What else was left ? look here ! ”

(With that she tore her robe apart, and half
The polish’d argent of her breast to sight
Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a laugh,
Showing the aspick’s bite.)

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“I died a Queen. The Roman soldier found
Me lying dead, my crown about my brows,
A name for ever!—lying robed and crown’d,
Worthy a Roman spouse.”

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest range
Struck by all passion, did fall down and glance
From tone to tone, and glided thro’ all change
Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for delight ;
Because with sudden motion from the ground
She raised her piercing orbs, and fill’d with light
The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest darts ;
As once they drew into two burning rings
All beams of Love, melting the mighty hearts
Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming thro’ the lawn,
And singing clearer than the crested bird,
That claps his wings at dawn.

“The torrent brooks of hallow’d Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and soon,
Sound all night long, in falling thro’ the dell,
Far-heard beneath the moon.





A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

“The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine :
All night the splinter’d crags that wall the dell
With spires of silver shine.”

As one that museth where broad sunshine laves
The lawn by some cathedral, thro’ the door
Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor.

Within, and anthem sung, is charm’d and tied
To where he stands,—so stood I, when that flow
Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father’s vow ;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure ; as when she went along
From Mizpeh’s tower’d gate with welcome light,
With timbrel and with song.

My words leapt forth : “Heaven heads the count of crime
With that wild oath.” She render’d answer high :
“Not so, nor once alone ; a thousand times
I would be born and die.

“Single I grew, life some green plant, whose root
Creeps to the garden water-pipes beneath,
Feeding the flower ; but ere my flower to fruit
Changed, I was ripe for death.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“My God, my land, my father—these did move
 Me from my bliss of life, that Nature gave,
Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of love
 Down to a silent grave.

“And I went mourning, ‘No fair Hebrew boy
 Shall smile away my maiden blame among
The Hebrew mothers’—emptied of all joy,
 Leaving the dance and song.

“Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
 Leaving the promise of my bridal bower,
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that glow
 Beneath the battled tower.

“The light white cloud swam over us. Anon
 We heard the lion roaring from his den ;
We saw the large white stars rise one by one,
 Or, from the darken’d glen,

“Saw God divide the night with flying flame,
 And thunder on the everlasting hills.
I heard Him, for He spake, and grief became
 A solemn scorn of ills.

“When next the moon was rolled into the sky,
 Strength came to me that equall’d my desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
 For God and for my sire !

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

“ It comforts me in this one thought to dwell,
 That I subdued me to my father’s will ;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
 Sweetens the spirit still.

“ Moreover it is written that my race
 Hew’d Ammon, hip and thigh, from Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth.” Here her face
 Glow’d as I look’d at her.

She lock’d her lips : she left me where I stood :
 “ Glory to God,” she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the wood,
 Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
 As one that from a casement leans his head,
When midnight bells cease ringing suddenly,
 And the old year is dead.

“ Alas ! alas ! ” a low voice, full of care,
 Murmur’d beside me : “ Turn and look on me :
I am that Rosamond, whom men call fair,
 If what I was I be.

“ Would I had been some maiden coarse and poor !
 O me, that I should ever see the light !
Those dragon eyes of angered Eleanor
 Do hunt me, day and night.”

POEMS BY TENNYSON

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and trust :
To whom the Egyptian : " O, you tamely died !
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist, and thrust
The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's creeping beams
Stol'n to my brain, dissolved the mystery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the dark,
Ere I saw her, who clasp'd in her last trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of Arc,
A light of ancient France ;

Or her, who knew that Love can vanquish death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about her king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy breath,
Sweet as new buds in Spring.

No memory labours longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what dull pain
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams again !
But no two dreams are like.



A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

As when a soul laments, which hath been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past years,
In yearnings that can never be exprest
By signs or groans or tears ;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat.

The Death of the Old Year

I

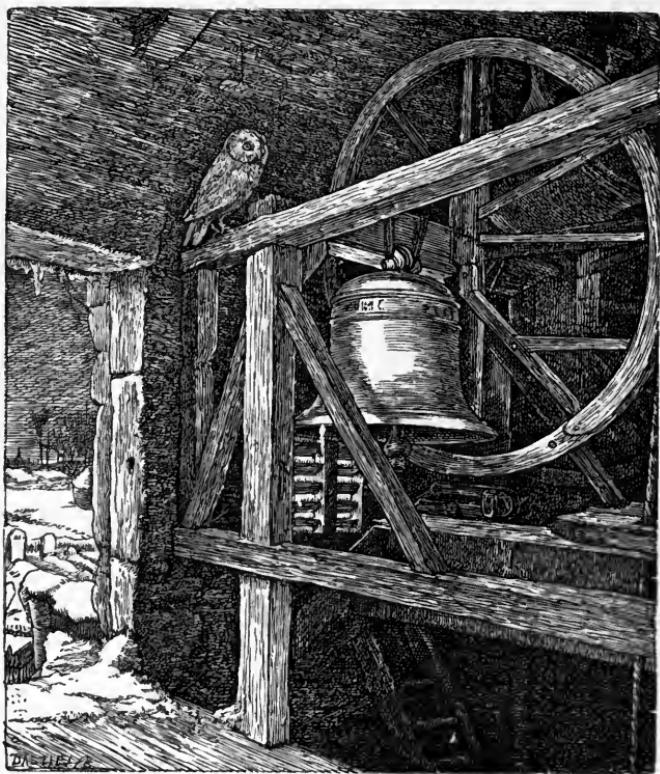
FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing :
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.

Old year, you must not die :
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

II

He lieth still : he doth not move :
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above.
He gave me a friend, and a true true-love,
And the New-year will take 'em away.

Old year, you must not go ;
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.



THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR

III

He froth'd his bumpers to the brim ;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.

Old year, you shall not die ;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

IV

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.

Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the New-year blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

V

How hard he breathes ! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro :
The cricket chirps, the light burns low :
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.

Shake hands, before you die.
Old year, we 'll dearly rue for you :
What is it we can do for you ?
Speak out before you die.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

VI

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack ! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes : tie up his chin :
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door.

Dora

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at them,
And often thought "I'll make them man and wife."
Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearned towards William ; but the youth, because
He had been always with her in the house,
Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said, " My son :
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die :
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora ; she is well
To look to ; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter : he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and he died
In foreign lands ; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora : take her for your wife :
For I have wish'd this marriage, night and day,
For many years." But William answer'd short :

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“ I cannot marry Dora ; by my life,
I will not marry Dora.” Then the old man
Was wroth, and doubled up his hands, and said,
“ You will not, boy ! you dare to answer thus !
But in my time a father’s word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to it ;
Consider, William : take a month to think,
And let me have an answer to my wish ;
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall pack,
And never more darken my doors again.”
But William answer’d madly ; bit his lips,
And broke again. The more he look’d at her
The less he liked her ; and his ways were harsh ;
But Dora bore them meekly. Then before
The month was out he left his father’s house,
And hired himself to work within the fields ;
And half in love, half spite, he woo’d and wed
A labourer’s daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing, Allan call’d
His niece and said : “ My girl, I love you well ;
But if you speak with him that was my son,
Or change a word with her he calls his wife,
My home is none of yours. My will is law.”
And Dora promised, being meek. She thought,
“ It cannot be : my uncle’s mind will change ! ”

And days went on, and there was born a boy
To William ; then distresses came on him ;
And day by day he pass’d his father’s gate,
Heart-broken, and his father help’d him not.
But Dora stored what little she could save,



DORA

And sent it them by stealth, nor did they know
Who sent it ; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and thought
Hard things of Dora. Dora came and said :

“ I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro' me
This evil came on William at the first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's gone,
And for your sake, the woman that he chose,
And for this orphan, I am come to you :
You know there has not been for these five years
So full a harvest : let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye
Among the wheat ; that when his heart is glad
Of the full harvest, he may see the boy,
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone.”

And Dora took the child, and went her way
Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies grew.
Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not ; for none of all his men
Dare tell him Dora waited with the child ;
And Dora would have risen and gone to him,
But her heart fail'd her : and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose and took
The child once more, and sat upon the mound ;
And made a little wreath of all the flowers

POEMS BY TENNYSON

That grew about, and tied it round his hat
To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye.
Then when the farmer pass'd into the field
He spied her, and he left his men at work,
And came and said ; " Where were you yesterday ?
Whose child is that ? What are you doing here ? "
So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground,
And answer'd softly, " This is William's child ! "
" And did I not," said Allan, " did I not
Forbid you, Dora ? " Dora said again ;
" Do with me as you will, but take the child
And bless him for the sake of him that's gone ! "
And Allan said, " I see it is a trick
Got up betwixt you and the woman there.
I must be taught my duty, and by you !
You knew my word was law, and yet you dared
To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy ;
But you go hence, and never see me more."

So saying, he took the boy, that cried aloud
And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell
At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,
And the boy's cry came to her from the field,
More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,
Remembering the day when first she came
And all the things that had been. She bow'd down
And wept in secret ; and the reapers reap'd,
And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood
Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy
Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise

DORA

To God, that help'd her in her widowhood.
And Dora said, " My uncle took the boy ;
But, Mary, let me live and work with you :
He says that he will never see me more."
Then answer'd Mary, " This shall never be,
That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself :
And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,
For he will teach him hardness, and to slight
His mother ; therefore thou and I will go,
And I will have my boy, and bring him home ;
And I will beg of him to take thee back ;
But if he will not take thee back again,
Then thou and I will live within one house,
And work for William's child, until he grows
Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd
Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm.
The door was off the latch : they peep'd, and saw
The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,
Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,
And clapt him on the hands and on the cheeks,
Like one that loved him ; and the lad stretch'd out
And babbled for the golden seal, that hung
From Allan's watch, and sparkled by the fire.
Then they came in : but when the boy beheld
His mother, he cried out to come to her :
And Allan set him down, and Mary said :
" O Father !—if you let me call you so—
I never came a-begging for myself,
Or William, or this child ; but now I come

POEMS BY TENNYSON

For Dora : take her back ; she loves you well.
O Sir, when William died, he died at peace
With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he said,
He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife : but Sir, he said
That he was wrong to cross his father thus :
'God bless him !' he said, 'and may he never know
The troubles I have gone through !' Then he turn'd
His face and pass'd—unhappy that I am !
But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for you
Will make him hard, and he will learn to slight
His father's memory ; and take Dora back,
And let all this be as it was before."

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the room ;
And all at once the old man burst in sobs :
" I have been to blame—to blame. I have killed my son !
I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my dear son !
May God forgive me !—I have been to blame.
Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many times.
And all the man was broken with remorse ;
And all his love came back a hundredfold ;
And for three hours he sobb'd o'er William's child,
Thinking of William.

So those four abode
Within one house together ; and as years
Went forward, Mary took another mate,
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.



The Talking Oak

ONCE more the gate behind me falls ;
Once more before my face
I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
Beneath its drift of smoke ;
And ah ! with what delighted eyes
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thrice a man,
Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field
I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

For oft I talk'd with him apart,
And told him of my choice,
Until he plagiarised a heart,
And answer'd with a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd, under Heaven
None else could understand ;
I found him garrulously given,
A babbler in the land.

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'Twere well to question him, and try
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Sumner-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Sumner-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs.—

“O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year
Made ripe in Sumner-chace ;

THE TALKING OAK

“Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
 And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
 The girls upon the cheek,

“Ere yet, in scorn of Peter’s-pence,
 And number’d bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence,
 And turn’d the cowls adrift :

“And I have seen some score of those
 Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
 To chase the deer at five ;

“And all that from the town would stroll,
 Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer’s soul
 Went by me, like a stork :

“The slight she-slips of royal blood,
 And others, passing praise,
Strait-laced, but all-too-full in bud
 For puritanic stays :

“And I have shadow’d many a group
 Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
 Or while the patch was worn ;

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“ And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

“ I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl, for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all ;

“ For those and theirs, by nature's law,
Have faded long ago ;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

“ From when she gamboll'd on the greens,
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

“ I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years—

“ Yet, since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :



THE TALKING OAK

“For as to fairies, that will flit
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh.”

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace ;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft hast heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

“O yesterday, you know, the fair
Was holden at the town ;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

“And with him Albert came on his.
I look’d at him with joy :
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.

“An hour had passed—and sitting straight
Within the low-wheel’d chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“ But, as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went,
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

“ She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf ;
She left the new piano shut :
She could not please herself.

“ Then ran she, gamesome as a colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her and the park.

“ A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child :

“ But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touched on, dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

“ And here she came, and round me play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my ‘giant bole ;’

THE TALKING OAK

“ And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist :
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

“ I wish’d myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock’d her hands.

“ Yet seem’d the pressure thrice as sweet
As woodbine’s fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold.”

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Sumner-chace !
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place !

But tell me, did she read the name
I carved with many vows
When last with throbbing heart I came
To rest beneath thy boughs ?

“ O yes, she wander’d round and round
These knotted knees of mine,
And found, and kiss’d the name she found,
And sweetly murmur’d thine.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“A tear-drop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse.
But I believe she wept.

“Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain ;
But not a creature was in sight :
She kiss'd me once again.

“Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd :

“And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

“Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlets' waving balm—
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.

“I, rooted here among the groves
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust :

THE TALKING OAK

“ For ah ! my friend, the days were brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

“ But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

“ She had not found me so remiss :
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss
With usury thereto.”

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers,
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well ;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

“ 'Tis little more : the day was warm ;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm,
And at my feet she lay.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

“ Her eyelids dropp’d their silken eaves,
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro’ all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix’d with sighs.

“ I took the swarming sound of life—
The music from the town—
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull’d them in my own.

“ Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye ;
A second flutter’d round her lip
Like a golden butterfly ;

“ A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine ;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine.

“ Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow’d all her rest—
Dropt dews upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast.

“ But in a pet she started up,
And pluck’d it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

THE TALKING OAK

“ And yet it was a graceful gift—
 I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
 His axe to slay my kin.

“ I shook him down because he was
 The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass.
 O kiss him once for me.

“ O kiss him twice and thrice for me
 That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
 Shall grow so fair as this.”

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
 Look further thro’ the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
 The front of Sumner-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
 That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
 Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thice,
 The warmth it thence shall win
To riper life may magnetise
 The baby-oak within.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
Thou art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery top
All throats that gurgle sweet!
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet!

All grass of silky feather grow—
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes!
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes!

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain,
That makes thee broad and deep!



THE TALKING OAK

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke ;
And more than England honours that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.

Locksley Hall

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn :
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall.

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts,
And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed ;
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed :

LOCKSLEY HALL

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be.——

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast ;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest :

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove ;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

And I said, " My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a colour and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, " I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong ; "
Saying, " Dost thou love me, cousin ? " weeping, " I have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his glowing hands :
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine no more !
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.





LOCKSLEY HALL

What is this? his eyes are heavy: think not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him: it is thy duty: kiss him: take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought:
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee with my hand!

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears such bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clangling rookery home.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind?

I remember one that perish'd: sweetly did she speak and move:
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly: love is love for evermore.

Comfort? comfort scorn'd of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow: get thee to thy rest again.





LOCKSLEY HALL

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.

“They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd”—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy ! wherefore should I care ?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these ?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy : what is that which I should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds are laid with sound.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new:
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales;

LOCKSLEY HALL

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro' the thunder storm ;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law.

So I triumphed, ere my passion sweeping thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from point to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion, creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's ?

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving towards the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passions were a target for their scorn ;

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moulder'd string ?
I am ashamed thro' all my nature to have loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness ! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-starr'd—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.

LOCKSLEY HALL

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag ;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have scope and breathing-space;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains !

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day :
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun :
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the Sun—

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set,
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

Godiva

*I waited for the train at Coventry ;
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,
To watch the three tall spires ; and there I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this :—*

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well,
And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but she
Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Upon his town, and all the mothers brought
Their children, clamouring, " If we pay, we starve ! "
She sought her lord, and found him, where he strode
About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their tears,
And pray'd him, " If they pay this tax, they starve." "
Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
" You would not let your little finger ache
For such as *these* ? "—" But I would die," said she.
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by Paul :
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;
" O ay, ay, ay, you talk ! "—" Alas ! " she said,
" But prove me what it is I would not do."
And from a heart as rough as Esau's hand,
He answer'd, " Ride you naked thro' the town,
And I repeal it ; " and nodding, as in scorn,
He parted, with great strides among his dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and blow,
Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet, all
The hard condition ; but that she would loose
The people : therefore as they loved her well,
From then till noon no foot should pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing ; but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and window barr'd.

GODIVA

Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift ; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook her head,
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her knee ;
Unclad herself in haste ; adown the stair
Stole on ; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway ; there she found her palfrey trapt
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity :
The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the spout
Had cunning eyes to see : the barking cur
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's footfall shot
Light horrors thro' her pulses : the blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes ; and overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared : but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw
The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the field
Gleam thro' the Gothic archways in the wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity :
And one low churl, compact of thankless earth,
The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,

POEMS BY TENNYSON

Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had their will,
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,
And dropt before him. So the Powers, who wait
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused ;
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers,
One after one : but even then she gain'd
Her bower ; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,
To meet her lord, she took the tax away,
And built herself an everlasting name.



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Sir Galahad

I

MY good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

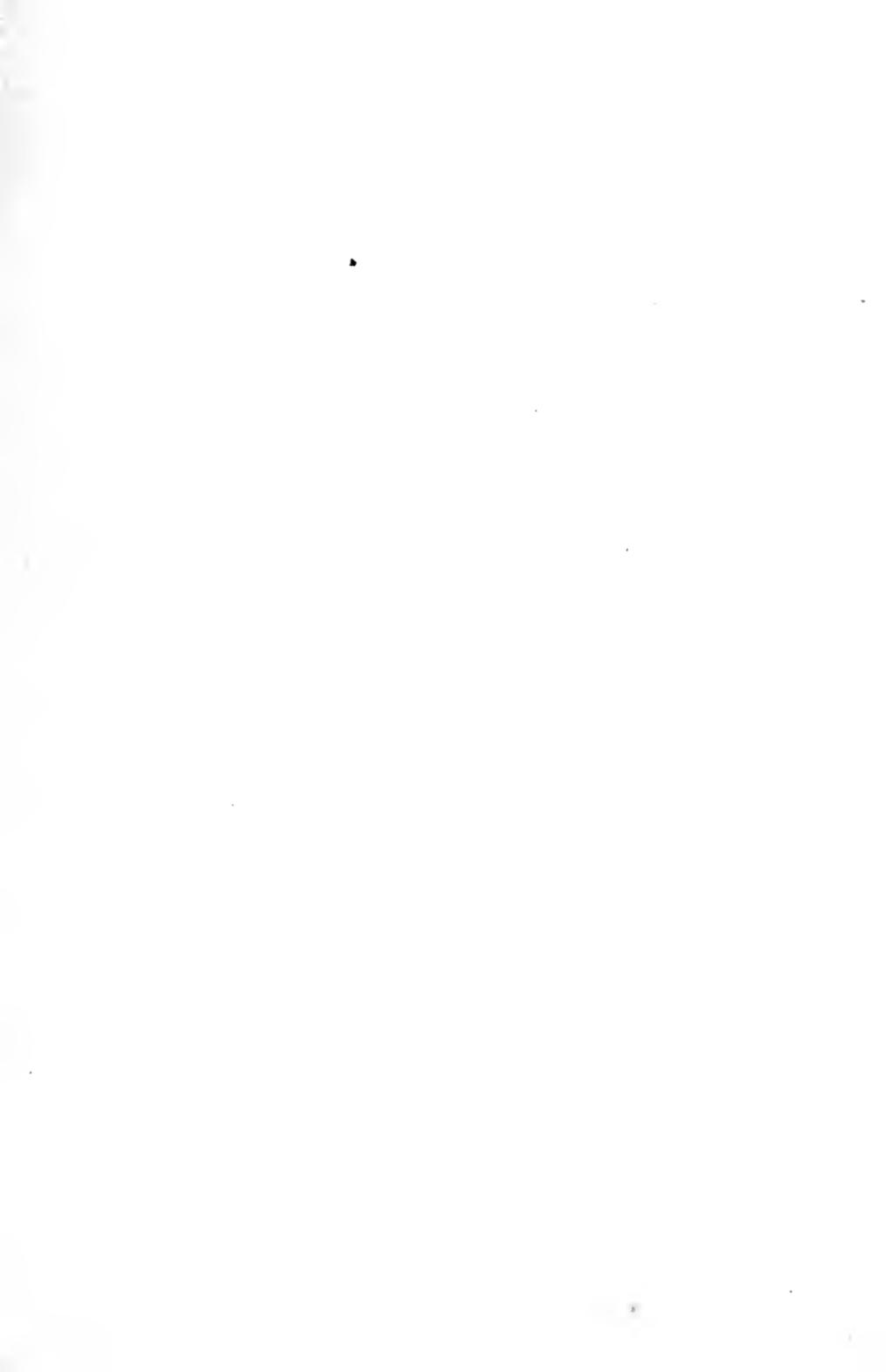
POEMS BY TENNYSON

II

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall !
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall :
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

III

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns :
Then by some secret shrine I ride :
I hear a voice, but none are there ;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.





SIR GALAHAD

IV

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark ;
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light !
Three angels bear the holy Grail :
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

V

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail,
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

VI

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

VII

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
“O just and faithful knight of God !
Ride on ! the prize is near.”
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

St Agnes' Eve

I

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :
My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
May my soul follow soon !
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

II

As these white robes are soil'd and dark
 To yonder shining ground ;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star
 In raiment white and clean.

III

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
 The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And throws her lights below,
And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
 The Bridegroom with his bride !



The Day-Dream

PROLOGUE

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :
 A pleasant hour has past away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
 The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
 I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming—and, behind,
 A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
 Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
 And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
 And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
 A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
 Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
 And order'd words asunder fly.

The Sleeping Palace

I

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains ;
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb.

II

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearths the festal-fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.



THE SLEEPING PALACE

III

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs :
 In these, in those the life is stay'd,
The mantles from the golden pegs
 Droop sleepily : no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that sings.
 More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
 That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV

Here sits the Butler with a flask
 Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
 The maid-of-honour blooming fair :
The page has caught her hand in his :
 Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
His own are pouted to a kiss :
 The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V

Till all the hundred summers pass,
 The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
 And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposing keeps,
 He must have been a jovial king.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

VI

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
At distance like a little wood ;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,
And glimpsing over these, just seen,
High up, the topmast palace-spire.

VII

When will the hundred summers die,
And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
Bring truth that sways the soul of men ?
Here all things in their place remain,
As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

The Sleeping Beauty

I

YEAR after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purple coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her traced form
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

II

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever ; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Glowes forth each softly shadow'd arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright :
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.

III

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
That lie upon her charmèd heart.
She sleeps : on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest :
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

The Arrival

I

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth ;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.
He travels far from other skies—
His mantle glitters on the rock—
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead :
“ They perish'd in their daring deeds.”
This proverb flashes through his head,
“ The many fail : the one succeeds.”

III

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks :
He breaks the hedge : he enters there :
The colour flies into his cheeks :
He trusts to light on something fair ;
For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whispered voices at his ear.

THE ARRIVAL

IV

More close and close his footsteps wind ;
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart.
His spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.
“Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be ! ”

The Revival

I

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
 And barking dogs, and crowing cocks ;
A fuller light illumined all,
 A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
 And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
 The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
 The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
 The palace bang'd, and buzz'd, and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
 Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III

And last with these the king awoke,
 And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,
 " By holy rood, a royal beard !





THE REVIVAL

How say you? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap."
The barons swore, with many words,
'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV

"Pardy," return'd the king, "but still
My joints are something stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mentioned half an hour ago?"
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return'd reply :
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

The Departure

I

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old :
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

II

“I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss ;”
“O wake for ever, love,” she hears,
“O love, 'twas such as this and this.”
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd through many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III

“O eyes long laid in happy sleep !”
“O happy sleep, that lightly fled !”
“O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !”
“O love, thy kiss would wake the dead !”

THE DEPARTURE

And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.

IV

“A hundred summers! can it be?
And whither goest thou, tell me where?”
“O seek my father’s court with me,
For there are greater wonders there.”
And o'er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
Thro’ all the world she follow’d him.

Moral

I

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wild weed-flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

II

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud, or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art, like Nature, dearest friend ;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'Envoi

I

You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men ;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep again ;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers ;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes ;
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

II

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decades new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
The flower and quintessence of change.

III

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !
So much your eyes my fancy take—
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake !
For, am I right or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not care ;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there :
And, am I right, or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you ;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude of some brighter world.

IV

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd hopes ?
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd ?

L'ENVOI

Where on the double rosebud droops
The fulness of the pensive mind ;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me ;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see :
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

Epilogue

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
“What wonder, if he thinks me fair?”
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail’d birds of Paradise,
That float thro’ Heaven, and cannot light?
Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.



Edward Gray

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
“And have you lost your heart?” she said ;
“And are you married yet, Edward Gray?”

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn’d away :
“Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

“Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father’s and mother’s will :
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen’s grave, on the windy hill.

“Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea ;
Fill’d I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

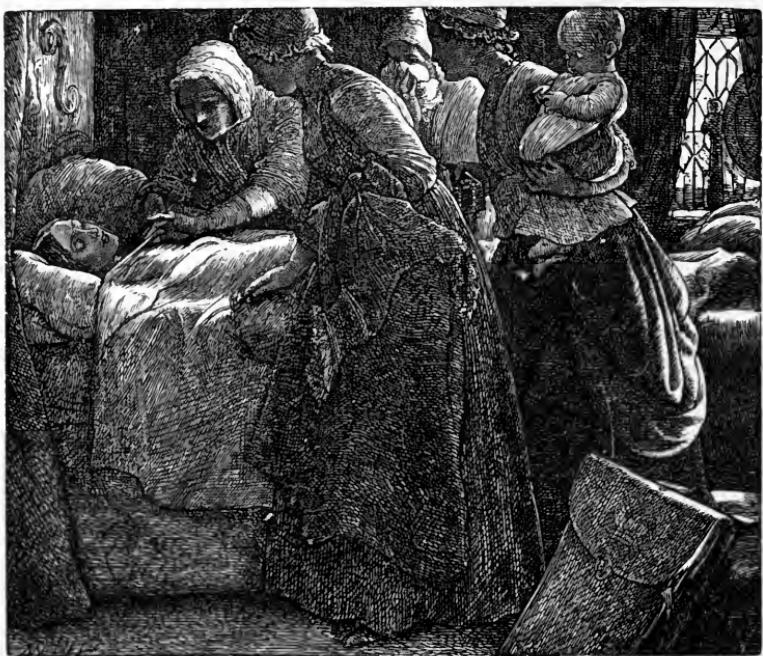
“Cruel, cruel the words I said !!
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
'To trouble the heart of Edward Gray.'

“There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper'd, 'Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !'

“Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
'Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;
And here the heart of Edward Gray !'

“Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree :
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

“Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward Gray !”



The Lord of Burleigh

IN her ear he whispers gaily,
“ If my heart by signs can tell,
Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well.”
She replies, in accents fainter,
“ There is none I love like thee.”
He is but a landscape-painter,
And a village maiden she.
He to lips, that fondly falter,
Presses his without reproof :
Leads her to the village altar,
And they leave her father's roof.
“ I can make no marriage present ;
Little can I give my wife.
Love will make our cottage pleasant,
And I love thee more than life.”
They by parks and lodges going
See the lordly castles stand :
Summer woods, about them blowing
Made a murmur in the land.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

From deep thought himself he rouses,
Says to her that loves him well,
"Let us see these handsome houses
Where the wealthy nobles dwell."

So she goes by him attended,
Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
Lay betwixt his home and hers ;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
Built for pleasure and for state.

All he shows her makes him dearer :
Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
Where they twain will spend their days.
O but she will love him truly !

He shall have a cheerful home ;
She will order all things duly,
When beneath his roof they come.

Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
Till a gateway she discerns
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns ;
Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before :

Many a gallant gay domestic
Bows before him at the door.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH

And they speak in gentle murmur,
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footstep firmer,
Leading on from hall to hall.
And, while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,
Proudly turns he round and kindly,
"All of this is mine and thine."
Here he lives in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
Is so great a lord as he.
All at once the colour flushes
Her sweet face from brow to chin :
As it were with shame she blushes,
And her spirit changed within.
Then her countenance all over
Pale again as death did prove :
But he clasp'd her like a lover,
And he cheer'd her soul with love.
So she strove against her weakness,
Tho' at times her spirits sank :
Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
To all duties of her rank :
And a gentle consort made he,
And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
And the people loved her much.

POEMS BY TENNYSON

But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
And perplex'd her, night and morn,
With the burthen of an honour
Unto which she was not born.
Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
As she murmur'd, "Oh, that he
Were once more that landscape-painter,
Which did win my heart from me!"
So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
Fading slowly from his side:
Three fair children first she bore him,
Then before her time she died.
Weeping, weeping late and early,
Walking up and pacing down,
Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
And he came to look upon her,
And he look'd at her and said,
"Bring the dress and put it on her,
That she wore when she was wed."
Then her people, softly treading,
Bore to earth her body, drest
In the dress that she was wed in,
That her spirit might have rest.



The Beggar Maid

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say :
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stept down,
To meet and greet her on her way ;
“ It is no wonder,” said the lords,
“ She is more beautiful than day.”
As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been :
Cophetua sware a royal oath :
“ This beggar maid shall be my queen ! ”

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